

A. T. Parker
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POPE AND TEDDY

STILL KEEP THE WORLD GUESSING

Pope Wants Roosevelt Ambassador at Washington. This the Price the Republican Party Must Pay for Continued Catholic Support

I have refrained from writing on the Roosevelt-Vatican episode, until the clouds cleared somewhat and I might get a clearer glimpse of the situation. It was plain to me from the very first, that the truth was being withheld, and the Methodist complication only a blind.

It is conceded by nearly every one that Taft, our putty President, commonly known as "The Good-Natured One," is out of the coming race; and all eyes are centered upon Teddy. That Teddy has made himself offensive to many, by his subservency to the Catholic church, is well known, and will not be overlooked in the next campaign. By that time the people will get over their hysteria about him, and there will be a questioning. The general opinion is that the Pope made a diplomatic blunder and got the worst of it, and is now disposed to be conciliatory about it. Don't believe a word of all this. The mystery surrounding the whole matter implies a deep, dark secret within it.

A great deal has been written about it, and, as evidence that every one is still in the dark, the guessing continues. If the whole truth had been revealed, the papers would have ceased discussing it, before this.

"Holland," the famous newspaper correspondent, comes out with the following in today's Cincinnati Enquirer. Read it carefully.

Friends of Colonel Roosevelt in this city have received information that the *unfortunate incident* which prevented his meeting with the Pope has caused not the slightest irritation, either on the part of Colonel Roosevelt or that of the Pope, at least so far as these two are concerned.

Within a few days there have returned from Europe several who have known the *true history of the incident*. Some of these have been brought into close touch with Colonel Roosevelt, some have within the past winter had audiences with the Pope, and have had recently good opportunities for learning the truth.

So it happens from both sources there come intimations that the Pope, on one hand, and Colonel Roosevelt, on the other, now have a good understanding of what it was that caused Colonel Roosevelt to make this single change in his plans.

The whole trouble was due to crude, undiplomatic and very unskillful handling of the matter by intermediaries, so to call them. There was fault upon both sides, and these errors were of a kind for which neither the Pope nor Colonel Roosevelt was responsible.

Too Much Red Tape.

There seems to have been overzealous and unnecessary technicality on the one side and on the other equally unfortunate management. The result was that the intermediaries brought about a misunderstanding.

There is no disposition on the part of the higher authorities of the Church of Rome now to criticize Colonel Roosevelt. That assurance was brought this morning by one who can speak of the matter by the book, almost.

On the other hand, Colonel Roosevelt now knows in detail how the matter was mismanaged, and if it had not been for the serious aspect he would have been disposed to be somewhat amused at the self-consequential officiousness of some who professed themselves to be authorized to speak for him.

It is probably due to this understanding that the irritation caused by the incident is already passing away in the United States. In the informal, and yet efficient manner, in which information is spread abroad among the clergy and hierarchy of the Catholic Church, it has been made known that there is no occasion for criticizing Colonel Roosevelt since he, as the Pope also did, suffered extreme annoyance by reason of interferences which neither authorized and for which neither was responsible.

Still Admires Roosevelt.

There is some reason for believing that Colonel Roosevelt has been informed that the Pope now perfectly understands the cause of the trouble and continues to entertain the kindest of sentiments of Colonel Roosevelt as well as admiration for his character.

Now, what can you make out of this veiled statement by this careful and reliable correspondent?

How is it this affair is always called "an unfortunate incident"? Why "unfortunate"? Both went into it with eyes wide open, and the whole matter was made up and settled before Teddy left Egypt. When he arrived at Naples, and several days before he had a chance to see the Pope, he made a public statement of the case, asking the newspapers at home not to agitate it, but to take it up tenderly and handle with care, and be easy on the Pope.

So it was all prearranged and settled before he got to Rome, and for all you and I know, it had been talked over for months. What's behind it? That's what we want to know. Quer, isn't it, that all these mighty differences should exist between these two distinguished representatives of pious and political compositeness, without ruffling in the least, the loving and personal friendship so long existing between them.

Holland says that "within the last few days there have returned from Europe several who know the true history of this incident." If, at last, this "truth" has been borne across the waters, by these "several" individuals, then all we have heard about it heretofore, must have been false.

Who are these "several" that came bearing the truth? Holland does not say; but ten to one, they are gentlemen who button their collars at the back of their necks,—a class very much accustomed to bearing secret tidings. What is so mysterious about truth that it should be so long delayed; if there is not something behind it all, that neither would have the public to know?

Holland knows all about it, but he dare not say it, and the papers dare not tell it. He says that it seems to have been the use

of "too much red tape," and "bungling diplomacy," and "over-zealousness" and "unnecessary technicality," and a lot more of such silly twaddle, for which "neither the Pope nor Colonel Roosevelt are responsible." Oh! Fudge!

This much, however, he states definitely. He says: "There is no disposition on the part of the higher authorities of the Church of Rome, now to criticize Colonel Roosevelt. This assurance was brought this morning by one who can speak the matter by the book."

This statement is a very important one. The Pope would not receive Roosevelt, but now he has nothin' agin' him. Why? Why this change of heart?

He further says: "In the informal yet efficient manner, in which information is spread abroad among the clergy and hierarchy of the Catholic Church, it has been made known that there is no occasion for criticizing Colonel Roosevelt."

Well, then, Teddy and the Pope must have come to an understanding. Why didn't they come to this before the matter happened, we ask? And what is "the informal and efficient manner" of spreading news, above referred to?

No more than this,—the Pope gives the word to his bishops, they to the clergy, and so on clear down the line it travels, and the Catholic masses, with few exceptions, think just as the Pope thinks, and vote just as he would have them to. So, when he gives out, that Teddy is all right now, if he wasn't before, it means that the matter is patched up between them, and that the Pope has accomplished the end he was striving to obtain.

Who can be so blind as to imagine that the Pope would get into such a petty fuss, without having some great object in view? What could have been that object? Well, we will come to it in a little bit.

The Methodist Church has lately printed a proclamation to the whole world, inviting investigation of the affairs of that church in Rome, and denouncing the attitude of the Vatican as false, misfeeling and tricky, and boldly says that "American politics is behind this matter."

Ah! ha! Ah! ha! American politics behind it! Now we are coming to the milk in the cocoanut. The great Methodist Church says this in a proclamation to the world asking investigation of its affairs of proselyting in Rome.

The Methodist Church is right there on the spot and it ought to know. It does know, but it does not specify. It simply says, "American politics back of it."

What politics? The Methodist bishops are not the only ones that know. The leading politicians know, and the leading editors know, but none of them speak it out. Why? Because of that mighty Catholic vote which makes and unmakes Presidents in this country. That's the why of it.

When the Bishops of the Methodist Church make such a charge, they certainly have proofs of their claim, but why do they not have the courage to come out and tell what every astute observer of American politics knows—that Roosevelt and Taft both dickered with Rome for the Catholic vote, and they got it, and so were elected as the result.

What was the price is the question next in order, for when does Holy Rome ever grant a favor without enriching herself many times over with boodle and privileges?

The rotten stink Roosevelt left behind him in dealing with the Vatican is still offensive to American nostrils.

That Roosevelt might receive the nomination and be elected Taft was sent as Ambassador Extraordinary to the Vatican for the purpose of establishing a precedence in this direction. One step at a time, gently, softly, must the way be paved that leads from Rome to the White House, so Taft was sent. Roosevelt carried out this sneaking job as quietly as possible. After it was done, and he found himself being severely criticized by a few Protestant clergy and Free Thinkers generally, he came out in a statement saying that he had consulted the leading bishops of other churches before sending Taft and they gave their approbation, and so he did not hesitate to send him.

Oh, yes! he privately consulted a few, not giving their names nor telling how many, but the bishops of churches are not the only people of this country. Why didn't he publicly bring this matter out that Free Thinkers, Jews, Agnostics and Protestants and laymen generally might know about it and likewise consult them? Why did he sneakily violate the constitution and commit one of the greatest crimes against the government? I have said it often, and I say it again—this one act of Theodore Roosevelt of establishing a precedent that may more easily lead to the establishment direct of diplomatic relations with the Vatican, was more treasonable than the act of Benedict Arnold, and he, Roosevelt, should have been impeached.

Oh! you think I am all in a stew and unnecessarily alarmed, do you? Well, do you know that right at this moment there is a powerful intrigue going on in Washington, well organized and strong, urging Taft to establish diplomatic relations with the Vatican?

No, you don't know it. Why don't you know it? Because the press of the country suppressed it. Why did it suppress it? Because, like the Taft visit to Rome, the conspirators don't want this knowledge to reach the people, as the question agitated. Because dirty work of this kind must be done sneakily, if done at all. The people are not to be consulted by their hired clerks. When they wake up some fine morning and find the deed done, then their hired clerks will laughingly ask them what they are going to do about it?

About two weeks before the Teddy-Vatican incident was pulled off, there appeared a short dispatch in the Cincinnati papers stating that, "A powerful organization, influential and far-reaching was hard at work in Washington pressing Taft to establish diplomatic relations with the Vatican." Slight mention of the same was printed next day and then no more—not an editorial anywhere on this most startling of all intrigues.

Why? The Republican party has the Catholic vote just now, because it has been coughing up. The Democratic party would like to have it. Neither of them are going to butt their heads against that most powerful of all organizations and deciding power, and so their papers keep silent.

Is any one so foolish as to believe that the Catholic hierarchy

would be urging the present administration to establish diplomatic relations with the Vatican unless direct promises had been held out to it in payment for its vote?

Can any one doubt that both Roosevelt and Taft have thus obligated themselves?

Certainly there can be no one so blind and foolish as to believe that these acts of our distinguished clerks are all to be seen plain on the surface. No! Monopolists, Jesuits and their political tools never work in the light. If the inside affairs of this nation were known to-day, it would stagger every mother's son of us.

Would Taft use his influence to establish these relations in order to be nominated again? Certainly he would. Didn't he go to Rome, and belly-wobble up to the Pope and kiss his hand—and maybe his toe? Didn't both he and Roosevelt manage to put about ten millions of good American dollars into the pockets of the Pope—not one cent of which was due him or belonged to him?

We are making a big hullabaloo about the forestry steal—but this steal, most open and brazen of them all, was given but little notice. The American people without the least resistance, let Roosevelt and Taft hold them up and take this money from them and all for the purpose of continuing those gentlemen in political power.

Would Roosevelt promise to use his influence toward the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Vatican in payment for renomination and election? Would our Teddy do that? Would a man who would intrigue with Harriman to raise a corruption fund of three hundred thousand dollars to carry the State of New York for him—do a thing like that? Would he?

Now, all this by preface, and let us get back to the Teddy-Vatican rupture. What was it all about—why should the truth concerning it be so carefully concealed? How does it now come about that it is all patched up, and it is given out that the Pope and Teddy now understand each other, and that their "admiration" for each other is just simply unbounded? And there is no disposition, as Holland says, on the part of the church of Rome to criticize Colonel Roosevelt and in the church's peculiarly "informal and efficient manner" this notice has gone clean down the line?

Can you find any Catholic today who will say a word against Roosevelt and his man, whom he met and kissed at Rome, wouldn't he?

Can you find any disinterested Catholic not for him? Can you find any of them howling themselves hoarse for Taft? No! Why? Simply because the time is not ripe and when it was up to Taft to deliver the goods, he dare not do it, and so they are done with Taft.

Rome cares nothing for any party or man, save as it can use it or him. It is all things to all men, and all men to the man who would be again renominated it can dictate what it would have for its vote. It can bind him to promises and if these promises are not fulfilled, it will certainly seek its revenge.

We often have to treat diseases wholly by symptoms, but the symptoms may be so plain that there can be no mistake as to the disease. Evidence, though wholly circumstantial, is often strong enough to convict, and no mistake is made in the sentence.

Let us apply the same fine reasoning to the Roosevelt-Vatican rupture. Holland says the truth has not been told about it—that some gentlemen just arrived direct from the Pope, have brought with them the truth, which they conceal. Heretofore then, we have not known the truth.

The Methodist church, right on the spot, says the truth has not been told, but that the whole affair has a deep dark political significance which they know, but do not specify.

How, then, are we to arrive at the truth except by symptoms and circumstantial evidence? It is plain to all that both Taft and Roosevelt have been dickered with the Catholic power for its vote. There can be no doubt of this, since the Boston Pilot, leading Catholic paper, boasted of the Catholic vote electing them, and who ever knew the church to exchange its vote without a big reward for services rendered?

It is plain to my mind, if not to others, that Roosevelt in addition to sending Taft to the Vatican, putting ten millions of dollars into the Papal treasury, and appointing many Catholics in high places, also promised that if it were possible for him to do so he would establish diplomatic relations with the Vatican.

His term expired and he did not fulfill his promise. No doubt it was secretly put to him many a time, but he dare not put it out on Taft who also promised the same for the help rendered, and who is now being hard pressed, but dares not.

What better evidence is needed? Would the Catholic church sue such a fool as to try to overthrow one of the cardinal principles of our constitution without the support of powerful party promises? Would it attempt such a thing without success being in sight? Not a bit of it. It generally knows what it is doing.

So Bwana Twombly, in the course of time, makes a big hunting trip and then turns his face towards the Holy City. He had to get left behind before he left Egypt and he was notified that he would not be received by the Holy Pater. It would never do to let the world know of the real differences existing, so the offensive propaganda of the Methodist church was palmed off as the real cause. It was after the manner of two thieves—neither dare tell on the other of their sneaking and pilfering, so the truth of the whole matter was concealed by repeating the Fairbanks rupture, and giving out that the Pope demanded of Roosevelt that he wouldn't speak before the Methodist and Roosa got chasty and in fine American style, said his dignity would not permit him to accede to the Pope's demand.

All this of course was part of the play, for Roosevelt knew what was coming before he left Egypt and no sooner landed in Naples than he telegraphed to this country his side of the affair. He then proceeded to Rome and the rest of the fake performance is well known. The Methodists didn't know the secret then, but now they know it and give out that a political plot is behind it all.

Well, then, what could that plot be? Among knowing ones, this is the general opinion—Roosevelt, they say, has been pro-Catholic to such an extent, that there is an undercurrent of feeling against him, and which will operate powerfully against him when he again comes up for election. It is already whispered around that Philippine situation will be investigated.

The trick, then, was to throw the Protestants off the track in this country by repeating the Fairbanks incident when Roosevelt came to Rome. The Catholic matter was genuine straight goods, for Fairbanks was not expecting to run for the Presidency. But why should the same rumpus be raised with Roosevelt, the Pope's friend? See?

By raising this row with Roosevelt then, it would lead the Protestants who are waking up to believe that the Pope is against him, and it certainly had just that effect. Protestants now are smiling all over how Roosevelt kicked the old Pope's pious posterior, while Holy Pope is tinkering in his gizzards over the slick way he is playing both ends.

The Pope realized that he had worked this end to the limit, and it was necessary to furnish a counter irritation over there in order to divert the minds of the people from the conspiracy existing between himself and Roosevelt, whose whole political career has been that of subservience to the Catholic church. Not only is this fooling the dum-f-dum Protestants, but the Masons as well. By thus getting these two elements quieted, no Catholic question would be raised, and all would be smooth sailing for Teddy who is up to his teeth in this conspiracy.

Now, that the fake quarrel is over, and they have kissed and
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BLUE GRASS BLADE

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By CHARLES CHILTON MOORE.

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The Blade urges upon its readers to contribute articles for its columns. The poet has said "Full many a gem of purest ray serene the dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear," and the same is true of your mind. Especially do we request articles from our younger readers. You may not be a Kipper, a Wilson, a Foote, a Ladd, or a Wettstein. Very few of us are. But you certainly can say something that will be of interest to your fellow-workers. These great men had their beginnings. Let us tell the readers of the Blade what you are doing and what you are thinking.

TIMELY TOPICS.

Love Contaminates.

Several priests last week ran off and got married, and were excommunicated in a jiffy. Now, they will never go to heaven, because they love. Yet, God, they tell us, is Love, and His home the abode of Love.

Smuggler Rollins.

Frank Rollins, when Governor of New Hampshire a few years ago, issued a Fast-day Proclamation, calling the people to prayer, etc., and requesting them to take some action to prevent the decline of religion in the rural districts, which he said, in many places, was devoid of church and Sunday School, and even of preachers to perform the marriage ceremony, and Christian service over the dead. Rollins was Governor then, and looking for votes.

Last week he was arrested for smuggling goods from Canada, and a prison sentence confronts him. Yet some people imagine that Christianity makes people good and immune from temptation and crime.

Soft and Pliable.

The papers report that the

Catholic Church, at last, is to have a saint in this country. Think of it! A real saint, or rather a saintess. It is to be a woman, and she the founder of one of their many mysterious female orders. I forget the name. She has been dead about 60 years. How did it come that this particular nun was selected? Well, this is what is given out. Some time ago, in removing her remains, the coffin was opened, and the body examined. The flesh had entirely disappeared, all except the brain, which they said was still intact, and "soft and pliable." We don't see anything miraculous or rare in this, nor why it should be the credential of sainthood; for what else could be the condition of any living being that believes in all the hocus-poens, mystery and moonshine of the Catholic or any other religion?

This much of credit we must give the friends of Old Le Diabla: Whatever else their brains may be, They're never "soft or pliable."

The "No-Popery Oath."

The Catholics of England are trying to bring about the removal of the "No-Popery Oath." The same was attempted when King Edward was crowned. This Oath forever blocks all hope of a Catholic becoming King of England, and is as follows:

"I . . . do solemnly and sincerely, and in the presence of God, profess, testify and declare that I do not believe that in the Sacrament of Our Lord's Supper there is any transubstantiation of the elements of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ at or after the consecration thereof by any person whatsoever, and that the invocation or adoration of the Virgin Mary or any other saint or the sacrifice of the Mass as they are now used in the Church of Rome, are superstitious and idolatrous, and I do solemnly in the presence of God, profess, testify and declare that I do make this declaration and every part thereof in the plain and ordinary sense of the words read unto me as they are commonly understood by English Protestants, without any evasion, equivocation, or mental reservation whatsoever, and without any dispensation already granted me for this purpose by the Pope or any other authority or person whatsoever, and without any hope of any such dispensation from any person whatsoever, and without thinking that I am or can be acquitted before God or man of any part thereof, altho' the Pope or any other person or persons or power whatsoever should dispense with or annul the same or declare that it was null and void from the beginning."

COMMENT:

This oath is all wrong. Laws should be made for all alike. Protestant superstition is no better than Catholic superstition. It is no more a lie and no more silly to say that the bread and wine of the sacrament turns into the real flesh and blood of a Jew, 2,000 years dead, than it is to say that simple belief in Jesus will cleanse a man of his sins and save him.

To be consistent, the Church of England should rid itself of its own foolish beliefs, and to be further consistent, the English Parliament should not compel Catholic, Jew or Free-thinker to help support the State religion, but instead should alike set right square down on every seething savage of salvation, and kick him out of State affairs. But this will hardly be likely. There are too many bigots on both sides. But as long as the Catholic gives his first allegiance to the Pope, he can't be a true citizen of England or of any other country. He has his own stupidity to thank, for the opposition to him as a King or President wholly undesirable. Each nation very naturally wants leaders whose first allegiance is to itself.

THE MARCH OF FREE-THOUGHT.

(By Dr. J. B. Wilson.)

Men progress only as they become free to think and speak. This they acquire only as they wade through blood and butchery and tears. Observe the restless feeling of the masses of Europe today, even in Turkey, where young men having caught the spirit of the age, dethroned the

tyrant who, masked as God Almighty, and established constitutional government.

More restless from day to day grow the impatient masses of Europe, threatening the continuance of present administrations of State and Church. Despite the very utmost efforts of the monarchial and priestly party in Spain, the late election resulted in an overwhelming majority for the Progressives of the various schools and classes, and the first that 53 seats of the priestly party are to be contested is evidence that the present ministry has determined to rely upon the forces of the people rather than upon those of the monarchy and clericals.

The government of Rome has passed from the Clerical party, and today is in the hands of the Freethinkers and Free Masons; and its Mayor is a Freethinking Jew, all of which are symptoms of the great popular desire for a change from the rule of King and Pope. It is estimated that 60 per cent of the people of Italy have dropped from the church, and the Spaniards are following them close in dropping out. It took them centuries to "ketch on," but when they did, there was an hehira. Science, steam, electricity and Freethought did it. As soon as the world was brought closer together by steam and nations began to learn of others, farewell to royal and saintly authorities.

Italians and Spaniards naturally look to their sister Latin nations, and seeing that France, Atheists, Free Masons and Socialists. They see the liberty, freedom and prosperity the French people enjoy, and admire France as the chief nation of the Latin world, and seeing that France's prosperity is the result of cutting loose from monarchial and priestly power, they are determined to follow the same policies in their own countries, and so develop agriculture and manufacturing, and become good financiers and business men, and grow rich and active and prosperous, like the great United Republic of Europe.

Another great source of education to these people has been the migration to this country, and intelligence of conditions here, carried back by the returning swarms. Also, these countries are crowded with American tourists every year, who excite their wonder by the money they have to spend and their evident education and refinement. All this inflames their imaginations with the superiority of republics over monarchies, and of secular education over parochial education.

It is easy, under the circumstances, for the leaders of the masses in parliament, to point to the United States and to France as examples of what Republican and secular institutions do for the people, and so their minds are daily being inflamed against the ruling powers—the aristocracy and the priesthood, in their own poverty-stricken and unhappy lands.

All their woes are now charged to King or Pope. All their hopes are based upon becoming Republics like France and America.

And all this has been the result of the few times and self-sacrificing Freethinkers; for Free Thought is the basis of all progress. Before science, before invention, before democracy, before socialism, ever has proceeded the Freethinker—the pioneer of all progress. Many have died the martyr's death, and thousands and tens of thousands have led lives of sacrifice, and died "unveiled, unhonored and unused," but their grand work lived on. Stake and prison, and inquisition and scorn, and ostracism could not stop them.

Now, note the change of the fates. The three great nations, who have outgrown their own superstition, which have clung to it as to life, are now turning from it as from something tyrannous and altogether unworthy, and are placing government and education in the hands of Freethinkers. The Infidel—the object of Christian hate for 2,000 years. Why do they do this? Because they have learned at last that the FREE man is the JUST man.

Twenty-five years ago who would have believed that, by this time, Nathan, the Freethinker and Jew, would be Mayor of Rome? Who would have dreamed that Briand, Freethinker and Socialist, would be Premier of France? Strange, is it not, that a religion which is so discredited right where it has been mothered, should find any room whatever in this Republic to exercise its



DR. ESTHES A. VAN RIPER

Dr. Esthes A. Van Riper died of pneumonia Friday afternoon, at 4:15 o'clock, at his home on West Main street. He had been ill with Bright's disease for the past year, being confined to his home since last August. She had, however, recently improved, but a severe cold, contracted about two weeks ago, suddenly ended his life.

Mrs. Esthes Ann Van Riper was the widow of Myron Hawley Van Riper and the daughter of Edwin and Lucinda Isabel Rodgers. She was born on Christmas day, 1844, at Lodi, Michigan. She attended the public schools of Ann Arbor and later the Druidic University of America, being graduated from the latter in 1883. She was a woman of more than ordinary ability, her intellectual attainments being of a high order. She was a member of the American College of Science, Philadelphia, Pa., of the Northern Indiana and Southern Michigan Medical Associations, and of the Red Cross society, in the work of which last-named organization she was particularly interested.

In August 1884, she married Dr. M. H. Van Riper, and three years later they

moved to Kankakee, Ill., where he established a practice, and she in the meanwhile studying medicine with him. The husband died in Kankakee. Mrs. Van Riper, becoming a registered physician, practiced in Illinois; she came to Circleville in 1881, where she continued the practice of her profession almost up to the time of her death.

Mrs. Van Riper was survived by two sons Myron E. Van Riper of this city and Garrett A. Van Riper of Cleveland. Of her immediate family there are living her aged mother and two sisters, Mrs. Augusta Ballard of An Arbor, Mich., and Mrs. Augusta Partridge of Denver, Col. She was a large hearted woman, and beside an ardent devotion to her two sons, was possessed of a spirit of charity which found constant vent in assisting the poor and needy.

The funeral was held at her late home on Monday afternoon at 4 o'clock, a song service being rendered by a quartette composed of Simon Frank, Charles Howard, Frank Howard and Fred Wittich. Interment was in Fugate Cemetery—Circleville (Ohio) Democrat.

deep-laid schemes of graft, and intrigues for political power. But if the reckoning came at home, it will come here too, in time, and come hard.

The Freethinker never sleeps. He may not be the richest man in the community. He may not mingle with the swell set. His name may not be blazoned in the ears of men—but he is ever abroad in the land, and in his quiet way, he is gradually broadening the visions of men.

This work of the humbly goes not uncounted. When he hurries, weighty thought far out into the pool of superstition, he feels a wave from its stagnant calm, which ripples right back to him.

MIRACLES.

I should not believe such a story were it told me by Cato, was a proverbial saying in Rome, even during the lifetime of that philosophical patriot. The incredulity of a fact, it was allowed, might invalidate its entire proof; in that case there is proof against proof, of the fact the strongest must prevail, but still with a diminution of its force in proportion to that of its antagonist.

A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, as far as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined,

Why is it more than probable that all men must die; that lead of itself cannot remain suspended in the air; that fire consumes wood, and is extinguished by water; unless it be that these events are found agreeable to the laws of nature, and there is required a violation of these laws, or, in other words, a miracle, to prevent them? Nothing is esteemed a miracle if it ever happen in the common course of nature. It is no miracle that a man seemingly in good health should die suddenly; because such a kind of death, though more unusual than any other, has yet been frequently observed to happen. But it is a miracle that a dead man should come to life; because that has never been observed in any age or country. There must, therefore, be a uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation. And as a uniform experience amounts to a proof, there is here a direct and full proof, from the nature of the fact, against the existence of any miracle; nor can such a proof be destroyed or the miracle rendered credible but by an opposite proof which is superior.

The plain consequence is (and it is a general maxim worthy of our attention), "that no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle unless its testimony be of such a kind that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavors to establish; and even in that case there is a mutual destruction of arguments, and the superior only gives us an assurance suitable to that degree of force which remains after deducting the inferior."

When any one tells me that he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consider with myself whether it be more probable that the testimony be either false or that this person should either deceive or be deceived, or that the fact which he relates should really have happened. I weigh the one miracle against the other, and according to the superiority which I discover pronounce my decision, and always reject the greater miracle. If the falsehood of his testimony would be more miraculous than the event which he relates, then, and not till then, can he pretend to command my belief or opinion.—(Hume.)

MATTER OF BUSINESS.

"Excuse me," said the stranger, as he stepped inside. "Is this Mr. Markham's office?"

"No," replied the man at the desk. "His office is on the floor above."

"Thank you," said the stranger as he went out, leaving the door open.

"Here, there," yelled the other. "Come back and close that door. Haven't you any doors to your house?"

"Yes," answered the stranger, who had again stepped inside and closed the door, "but they all have springs on them. Allow me to show you my patent, double back-action door spring. It closes the door without a bang, and is warranted to last 50 years—if it doesn't you get your money back. The price is only 25 cents. Yes, seeing it you'll feel you have five for one dollar. Thank you, sir. Good morning!"

Way to Choose.

A friend has let out a secret regarding the way in which some young women judge novels.

In a bus two girls were talking of what they read.

"Oh, I choose a novel easily enough," said one. "I go to the circulating library and look at the last chapters. If I find the rain softly and sadly dropping over one or two lonely graves, I don't have it; but if the morning sun is glimmering over bridal robes of white satin, I know it's all right."

What It Proved to Him.

The announcer arose in the eighteenth story.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we have just passed the Chinese quarter."

Old uncle Weatherby nudged his wife.

"Aln't that fine, Mandy?" he chuckled. "I can't look nothing like as he's seedled as when we first came that they'd surely tried to have passed that Chin see quarter on me."

A Curiosity.

"There is said to be a tree in Australia which, when touched, knocks the person touching it down."

He said the shoe clerk boarder, who had been reading the scientific notes in a patent-medicine almanac.

"So," ejaculated the scanty-haired bachelor at the palm extrinsic of the mahogany. "It is evidently a species of boozwood."

BROTHERS.



Senator Graber (to constituent, working in orchard)—What are you doing?

Constituent—Gratifying.

Senator Graber—Shake!

About the Worst.

Of troubles in this sad old world it seems there is no end.

But sadder than all others is To find a phony friend.

Going Together.

"She keeps her house in the most complete manner."

"Yes, but it has one drawback."

"What is that?"

"I have noticed that these model housewives who keep their homes in apple-orchard are apt to be crusty."

A Prudish Person.

"I see where a musical comedy has a chorus of girls called 'The Runaway Crew.'"

"Just so."

"Judging from the clothes they don't wear they ought to run away and hide."

An Unusual Case.

"What, brother, an angel? Didn't the duke need the money?"

"He needed the money, but he refused to let her father use his coat of arms as a trade mark for a brand of axle grease."

A Medical Puzzle.

"There is one odd thing about shingles."

"What is that?"

"That they don't come in the roof of the mouth."

Decided for Him.

"Have you decided that you would not eat meat?"

"No, brother, I guess our butcher has decided that I won't. He wants me to pay my bill."

Will Never Know.

"Seymour is better to be right than president."

"Ashley—is it? How do you know? You've never been either, and never will be."

PIUS AND TEDDY.

Continued from Page 1
made up and come to the following: Roosevelt in my opinion, has made many concessions to Rome, and among them, that of establishing diplomatic relations, if it be in his power. This Rome must have to offset his waning influence at home. Upon good information the hierarchy already set up at Washington, I am told, is in fact a secretly recognized diplomatic machine, as much an accredited power as that of any other nation in all except the name. But Rome, to be given independent standing must have accredited public recognition, and for this she will sell her vote to any party machine, it matters not, that will yield to the scheme.

She knows her power. She has the organization. She controls the votes. Roosevelt cannot be President again with Rome against him. Oh! there's lots of funny things going on that are carefully concealed from the public sight. Pierpont Morgan handles the Pope's millions in this country. Does any one hear of any fighting the Morgan combines? Oh, no! But they fight the steel trust and others that Pierpont and the Pope have nothing to do with.

Naturally you ask, how could Roosevelt as President establish diplomatic relations with the Vatican? Not alone, of course, the whole Republican machine at headquarters must be set in motion to manufacture sentiment and help. When the trick is turned, it will be done before the people know it.

Most of us are silly enough to imagine that we still have a democracy here. What simpletons we are.

Laws are no longer made by the people, or not even by the representatives of the people. They are not even debated in Congress. They are made in the Committee room. Who controls the committee room? The lobbyist, the representative of the monopolist, the grafter, and the churchman. There will be no debate on the subject, and but few will know anything about it, when Rome at last attains her long desired, and most coveted recognition in this country.

If everything were done in the open, Rome would not stand the ghost of a chance, and there would be no necessity for alarm. But Rome and political bosses don't work that way. For my part, I would like to see an open fight and settle the matter. But Rome is smooth enough not to go openly against a majority. But if she can work herself in secretly, with the assistance of the solid support of the majority, she will be able to do her worst. Once in, she will lift her head up in prestige again before the world. She will command the secrets of state. She already commands the army and navy, having nearly all of the officers, and two-thirds of the soldiers. What a chance for her to come with the assistance of the old world to crush completely on this little is left of the republican government, which she hates with all the hatred of her inquisitorial soul.

It only takes a little thing to change history. The firing of a gun may be the start of a prolonged and bloody war. Lafayette warned us that if ever this government is destroyed it would be by the Catholic power, and Lincoln also warned us that this cloud came from "saw a dark cloud hanging over us, and that this cloud came from Rome."

Mark Hanna came out boldly, saying: "We depend upon the Roman church and the supreme court to save us from Socialism." Who did he mean by "We"? Why, monopolistic corporations like himself, bosses, grafters, aristocrats, non-producers and privileged classes. The Pope already controls the labor unions of this country, and the majority of the members of which are Catholics, and able to block every great effort the leaders may try to make.

The Socialist party can never become a power, for it must lay its foundations in the cities, and gather its strength from the working classes, and two-thirds of these are Catholics, controlled by the Pope, the foe of Socialism and all labor reform, and the friend of privilege and authority. No, the old snake isn't dead yet by a damned sight; but its last hour is near. It must win here, or lose on all over. The mighty effort it is making here, therefore should put every American on guard.

Can any of you be so foolish as to believe that any of the old world autocratic powers, that are now toasting Roosevelt, has any love whatever for our Democratic form of government, or our hearts. With this old Snake of Superstition one could round our hearts, how quick they would all jump at our throats, and fiendishly destroy this one great effort of freedom and hope of mankind. Ah! a little leak in the dike will let in the mighty seas.

Some of you will say, "Oh! they can never make it—there's too many of us, and when the time comes, we'll show 'em."

Yes, there's plenty of us, but we are unorganized and isolated, and distributed over the farming regions, and farmers know little of the real situation.

One man with a Springfield rifle and sixty rounds, out in the street, can keep a thousand unarmed, at bay. Why? Because he is organized, and great numbers unorganized, count for little.

The Catholic church is the greatest organized political power in the world, and doubly so, or not, they are trying for it right now, with a well organized and influential force, pressing Taft for the fulfillment of his promises. They have evidently again put the clamps to Roosevelt—the greatest newspaper hero America ever produced, and the most dangerous President, she has ever had. The Catholic Church has a vote to sell, will make or unmake presidential ambitions. But it also has a price.

Would Roosevelt sell out to the Catholic Church for renomination and election? Would he? Who, for Catholic votes, but Theodore Roosevelt, ever tried to make out the impossible thesis that Roman Catholicism has any determining influence in the selection of these American States? Who for the same vote, confessed in his letters to "Dear Maria" (Mrs. Storer) that he had been exceedingly generous to Catholics in his appointing power in New York, and who was it that dickered with the same "Dear Maria," to make John Ireland Cardinal?

Who had more to say of the Catholics of Maryland than Theodore Roosevelt? Who hailed the day when a Roman Catholic—whose allegiance is always to the Pope first, should sit in the seat of Lincoln? Who sent Taft to the Vatican? Who, had pressed before his election, settled the Friar lands question, enriching the Pope by many millions? And then you ask, "Would he?"

None of the above is circumstantial, but proven evidence. With such evidence before your very eyes, would Roosevelt, to be again nominated and re-elected, conspire to establish diplomatic relations with the Vatican?

Well, we'll see. If he comes up for the Presidency again, and the Catholics are with him, you may know what's up. They want recognition. They are bound to have it, if they can get it. They are trying for it now. They will keep trying. A few weeks ago, the Pope would not receive a call from Teddy. Now, it is all "a bungling mistake," and they fully understand, and they ever so much, and find any Catholic at paper saying a word against Teddy will you? In that "informal yet efficient manner," spoken of by Holland, in which the church spreads its information, the word has gone down the line, "Keep mum—Teddy's fixed."

Some, reading this, may think I am a bitter partisan Democrat. I am not, but an Independent in politics, having voted the Republican ticket more often than the Democratic. I think Mr. Roosevelt is a great man—in some ways—and certainly the greatest all-round politician—who ever sat in the Presidential chair. From ward-jobbery up, he thoroughly understands the prejudices and weakness of men, and knows how to play them for all they are worth and for his own glorification. This is his particular forte, which most would mistake for statesmanship. For carefully straddling both small and great questions, he is an adept, and for centering the national importance upon himself, this country has not seen his like.

He has struck many blows at corporations and trusts, but always with a velvet hand. His talk was all bluster and amounted to just this—some trusts are bad, but some are good, so, don't hurt the

trusts—and foreverjones were ever hurt by him.

He was forever fighting grafters and other criminals, but in seven long years no one was arrested and jailed. He rushed at them like a mad bull, but never horned a criminal. He belovied and paved however, till he could be heard all over the plantation, and the fool common people thought he was roaring in their defense.

As Lincoln said of Geo. B. McClellan, "he was hell on dress parade but damn poor on action." Anyhow, he has been able to hum-fudge most Americans, and it takes a smart man to do that.

But, while he was thus making a grandstand play for self-glorification, while jollying the poor, and winking at the rich, while exalting the dignity of labor, and throwing his arms around capital, he unwittingly set in motion a sentiment, or rather strengthened a sentiment already set in motion, which has led to the present outcry against the corruption of office and of organized plottings. For this we give him credit although he did it unwittingly and was playing both the poor and the rich, for the same purpose—his own glory.

Show me an issue, that he did not thus straddle; and boiled down, what has his whole talk amounted to but this have been, but you go, government rests on the character of the individual.

I defy any one to show me any accomplishment, beside the above, resulting from all of Roosevelt's masterful (?) statesmanship (?). If he has solved anything further than this—point it out. Don't fly up at this now, but be calm, and just sit down and think it over, and see if you can find where he has given any solution to any question that anybody has accepted. Just try it.

Take the Friar lands for instance. He gave the Pope \$7,500,000 for them. Capitalists have gotten a hold of some of this—a scandal resulting, and the Friars are still on them just the same. Take my word for it, they'll get most of those lands back for Catholic support. They didn't go one step, and already many concessions have been made them. This is a fair example of Roosevelt's glittering statesmanship.

He is a natural Jesuit—all things to all men, inasmuch as it will contribute to his own glory.

The cowboy, he declares, is a better and more useful citizen than the farmer. The farmer is the very salt of the earth. Thus, he is all things to all men.

A blustering, tearful friend of all the oppressed, yet in Brussels, he swaths his silk hat with a ten-inch band of mourning for the degenerate rone, and bloody butcher, and robber of the Congo.

A political prostitute, yet a prophet of righteousness, and a preacher of state platitudes. An uncompromising Republican, he courts the admiration of kings. A croaker for peace, yet forever blowing the trumpet of war.

Having said a running Spaniard in the back, he is a peer of the heroic, a model of militarism. He knows all about it. He has been there.

An irrepressible egotist with an ununmuzzed mouth, he is silent on no question, though he know much or little about it.

Yes—just once he was silent—just once he did not, unwork. At the tomb of Napoleon, it is reported, that "he held himself in speechless reverence, and departed from the mausoleum without making a speech."

In that august entourage, and immersed in these stupendous environments, he absolutely gave his chin a rest. The spectators of the great campaigns in Italy, Austria and Germany silenced that one standard voice.

For the moment, at least, Jena and Austerlitz obscured and obliterated San Juan; and as the brilliant figures of Napoleon's wonderful campaigns, and tremendous battlefields—Massena, Soult, Launtes, De Saix and Ney, passed before the Colonel in glittering and shadowy processions, he could not but see himself surrounded by the Buck Enshlaves and Rattlesnake Potes of the crowded hour of Santiago.

As he bent over the illustrious ashes, and afterwards whirled the sword that once made all Europe tremble, that swept crowns from historic heads, and caused cabinets and chancelleries to shake in their unhappy shoes, what else could this mighty man of America, but maintaining a reverence reserve. No wonder he was silent in that stupendous atmosphere.

But the Colonel soon revived his wind and his resourceful powers of declamation. Relieved from the chastening shadows of Napoleon's tomb, and reanimated by the urgencies of brother nations elsewhere he soon burst into pompous platitudes, chattering of righteousness, and flooded the crowded heads and the effete nobility of other worlds with his strange and sudden vociferation.

But what the use to go on. What his politics are, or his religion is, no one knows. He is the champion straddler of the universe. Whoever pipes, he dances; whoever mourns, he wails.

Summed up, the little has been done for his country, was at a big crowd and wholly obscured by the much he has done for himself. The general public, just now, look upon him as a great God Almighty. It will get over it. Hysteria, like all things else earthly comes, at last, to an end. He will be home soon, and "the shouting and the tumult" will cease, and men will quiet down and come to their sober senses, and at least realize that two-thirds of all Teddy's greatness is but the reflection of their own foolishness—that the disposition of men to gulp down all that is handed to them, from those in authority, is the most amazing of all human weaknesses.

Though the Catholic population is only one to six in this country, still organization is power, and the church has the organization. When it comes to pass that the Pope can say, "We President," then the church is justified in her claims that this is a Catholic country.

With the advance of the Papacy to political supremacy, down must go Protestantism—Protestantism—that once had a tongue in its head and a spine in its back. Impotent, spineless Protestantism is having its putty nose pulled and twisted by the Pope as he pleases, and don't seem to know it. It is silly enough to imagine that Roosevelt now stands with it, because of the late "unfortunate" fiasco pulled off at Rome.

A blind man ought to be able to see that it was only a make-believe for the purpose of shifting attention from the close-bound relation of Theodore Roosevelt to the Catholic Church.

Now, let us all "be good," and "cultivate character," and especially "righteousness," and thine, Theodore, be the power and glory forever and ever.

THE GREATEST GIFT.

(By Otto Stechhan.)

Blessed, if thou call'st a child thine own.

Which finds in love and not in fear

A friend in time, a confidant;

Whose purpose pure, whose broadened views,

A character of worth portray;

A child at heart, in courage true.

By reason guided, love controlled,

Whose courts but of praise deserve,

Whose motto reads, "Excelsior,"

Who seeks the grand, the edifying,

In nature, are the beautiful;

By whom the myths of superstition

Are calmly viewed at Reason's shrine.

Who thus endowed with soul ennobling

Detests the vulgar, vice abhors;

Who upward striving, onward forging,

Gives promise of a useful life.

Though not a sage, nor yet a dillard,
Not lacking either wit nor worth,
Who by his actions, his example,
Add honor to the cause of man.

Has then a child, as I've portrayed it,

Then thou indeed art doubly blessed;

Then all thine honors, riches, fame,

Will pale beside this precious gift.

A TRIP TO ROME

By

DR. J. B. WILSON.

The International Congress of Free-

thinkers was held in the City of Rome

Italy, September 21, 1904. The author

attended the Congress as the American

delegate. It is an account of travel and

personal experiences that has received

universal recognition from press and

people. In its religious dogmas and tales

of priestly fiction are ruthlessly exposed

while the general style is without com-

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"THE COMING RACE."

Tell me, mother, is it really
True, as jokers like to state,
That when you were young as I am
You had most to masticate?
People tell such funny stories,
Things that cannot be, you know,
So I thought I'd ask you, mother,
If this fairy tale were so.

Tell me, father, are they joking
When these foolish people say
You had better on the table,
Sometimes even twice a day?
Eggs, I know, were once quite common.
I learn from books I read,
But that you ate meat and butter
Seems incredible, indeed.
—William Wallace Whitlock, in New
York Sun.

HOW HE UNDERSTOOD IT.



Dr. Quint—Did the colored doctor
treat you very long?
Ephraim—No, sah, he nebba done
say treat once while he were comin'
heah.

Oh, Joy!
Lift up, ye bardists,
A jubilant strain:
Peeka-soo trolleys
Are with us again!

Brief and Expressive.

"Our chief is witty," said the de-
fective with the telegram.
"In what way?" asked the friend.
"Why, the criminal we were after
was named Rich. The chief tele-
graphed these words that told all."
"What were they?"
"Get Rich quick."

Market for His Product.

Halfax—Sponger, the man who
makes the "Energetic Rising Yeast,"
is preparing for a tremendous future
business.
Fundy—Why is he so optimistic?
Halfax—He has discovered that his
product makes an excellent anti-balist
for airships.

A Bad Move.

First Legislator—I took my wife
with me to Annapolis yesterday to
protect me from the feminine in-
vasion.
Second Ditto—That was a wise
move. I wish I had thought of it.
First L.—He glad you didn't. She
was converted, and is now worse after
me than they were.

All Figured Out.

"Why do you refuse to carry an um-
brella?"
"Well, in a heavy storm you get wet
anyhow, don't you?"
"I suppose so."
"And in a mild rain you don't need
one. Besides, somebody would steal
it."

Pleases Him.

"Scribbles writes some very pleas-
ing verse."
"Indeed? I've never heard of his
pleasing anybody."
"Evidently you've never observed
it on Scribbles."

KEPT TABS ON 'EM.



Tom—Skinner always employs two
lawyers.
Jack—What for?

Tom—He gets business advice from
one and then consults the other about
how much he ought to pay of the first
one's bill.

The Easy-Going.

Some people fight from day to day.
With valor and persistence,
While others choose, along life's way,
The line of least resistance.

The Girls.

Mayme—When I take my hair down
it comes below my knees.
Gracey—Why did you buy a length
that doesn't fit you?

No Cause for Excitement.

"Hurry up! A man is drowning in
your well!" "That's all right; we don't
use that well any more."

REAL DANGEROUS.

The stranger in the public play-
grounds noticed that the little boys
were giving the little girls a side-
berth on this particular morning.
"That's queer," he mused. "Say,
sonny, I thought you little boys and
girls played together?" "We do some-
times," enlightened the youngster on
the sandle, "but not today." "And
why not?" "Cause it is as much as
we can do to keep out of their way.
They are playing suffragettes and mak-
ing believe we are policemen."

Given by Mistake.

Disgusted Customer (who has
brought back a watch he purchased
from jeweler)—It was a disgrace for
you to sell me a watch like that. It's
absolutely impossible to make it go
fast enough.
Jeweler (after examining the time-
piece)—I most humbly beg your pa-
don, sir; you surely have good reason
for being dissatisfied. I don't know
how the make happened, but I find
that I sold you a plumber's watch.

Under the Spell.

"About this time last night," said
young Harlow, as he lit a fresh
cigarette, "I was sitting on a sofa be-
side a girl, telling her that she was
the only one in all the world I had
ever loved."

"And she believed it?" queried Dil-

on.
"Of course she did," answered Har-
low. "Why, I believed it myself at
the time."

Not Sympathetic.

When I told Mr. Mittens about the
unhappy existence of his old friend,
Mary Outsewer, he gave not the slight-
est indication of sympathy, but
snapped:
"It serves her right—it's the girl's
own fault!"

"Why is it her fault?" I questioned.
"It's her fault," he explained, "be-
cause she refused to grasp the oppor-
tunity I once gave her for marrying me."

Illusion Spoiled.

"I recently made the acquaintance
of a young woman who declared that
she had never wanted to go on the
stage."

"Most sensible."
"I was on the point of so consider-
ing her when she informed me that
she hoped some day to fly with Pau-

USED THE PADDLE ON HIM.



Will—Say, Jack, your father de-
lights in telling people that he pad-
dled his own canoe.

Jack—Yes; and I've often thought
when I was a boy that he imagined I
was one.

A Big One.

I'd love to make a fortune.
A big one as big as the dollar.
One big as journals tell us.
You can make raising chickens.

A Fragile Flower.

"You want da hair cut?" asked the
barber in the rush shop. "Ten I call
my brother Petro." "Is Petro better
at hair-cutting than you?" asked the
new patron. "Petro much better. He
tells da wonderful ghost story and
your hair rise and he lose less time
holding it up with da comb."

A Probable Short Term.

Mrs. Samuels—And such a man!
But, of course, Mary married him for
his money?
Mrs. Hearloom—Yes, and also be-
cause no company would run the risk
of insuring his life.

Realism on the Stage.

"Why don't the theatrical managers
want husband and wife in the same
company?"
"They think the public wouldn't
care to see a man making love to
his wife."
"Looks too much like acting eh?"

Quite Likely.

"A woman in Indiana claims her
husband hasn't supported her in thirty-
seven years." "He must be a sorry
rascal." "No doubt." Still, she says
he knows just how the government
ought to be run."

Expecting Too Much.

"Has your wife got a cook?" "How
do I know?" "It seems to me that
you should know if anyone should."
"But I haven't been home since noon."

New Reason.

Master—Why were you late for
early school, Wright?
Wright—Please, sir, I must have
overhauled myself!—London Punch.

CENSUS OF CHURCHES IN THE UNITED STATES

Gives Protestants, 20,287,742; Catholics, 12,679,142.

Washington, May 31.—The aggregate number of communicants or members of all religious denominations in continental U. S. for 1906 was 32,936,445, according to the U. S. Census of religious bodies, a part of the Census bureau's special report now being in press. Of this grand total, the various Protestant bodies reported 20,287,742 and the Roman Catholic church 12,679,142. Of the Protestant communicants, according to the report, 80.6 per cent were outside the principal cities of the country. Of the Catholics, 27.9 per cent were in the cities of the first class, those having a population of more than 300,000, while 47.8 per cent were outside the cities of the first, second and third and fourth classes the last class being cities of 25,000 to 50,000. Protestants in the first class cities aggregated 7.3 per cent. Of the Protestants, the Protestant Episcopal Church reported a majority of its communicants in the big cities—51.2 per cent, as did the Church of Christ (Scientists), 82.6 per cent. The report shows a growth of all communicants, both in the cities and country, since 1890. In the five leading cities, the proportion of communicants to population was: New York, 44.7 per cent; Chicago 40.7 per cent; Philadelphia 38.8 per cent; Boston, 62.6 per cent; St. Louis, 46.6 per cent. (From Cincinnati Times-Star.)

Comment.—The clergy have been crowing a good deal over this report, put out by the U. S. Census of religious bodies.

FAKE.

The fake part of it is plainly seen in the fact that all the government enumerators know about church membership is what the clergy themselves report. It is hardly likely that they would report a decrease, as all of them want to make a good showing, but it would never do to let the wicked world see that the "power of the Lord," by which we mean the "power of the clergy," is on the wane.

But take that report just as it stands, and what is it but an awful confession of the weakness of Christianity?

The first consideration to be made is, that 99 out of every 100 children have already been brought up in the church, or under its influence. Whatever gains the church makes is in birth, and in bringing back a few into its fold who were formerly in the church.

When a Catholic gets a Protestant, or a Protestant wins a Catholic, that is no gain to Christianity. If a Methodist leaves his Church and goes to the Baptist, that is no addition to the ranks of the Lord.

But, we read of numerous instances, where clergymen have taken an actual invoice of their stock on hand, and had, after striking off the names of the number of dead pious on the books, and those moved away and those who have become indifferent and dropped out entirely, that their real assets are from one fourth to a half less than they supposed. A year ago a newly appointed Chicago pastor who thought he was "pumping up a congregation of 1,400," was astonished at the smallness of his audiences. He went to weeding out and found he had in reality but 653 or less than half.

There is hardly a congregation anywhere, big or little, but is likewise carrying names of disinterested people, who have ceased to attend and who do not justly belong to the church, but who go into this count. From 10 to 25 per cent is a fair proportion of the delinquency in every church.

Father McTearney (now deceased), the famous Socialist priest of Bellevue, Ky., told me that he always padded his reports to the Bishop. When he had a congregation of 600, he reported first year a gain of 200, and so kept adding as high as 300 over the real gain every year. This he said, the Bishop ordered him to do. It not only made a good showing for him, but also for the Bishop. He had a large congregation and could easily pad. Smaller congregations could not pad so easily, as the people themselves would detect a false report.

What a wonderful, wonderful spectacle, that of the Catholic church. It has had over 25,000,000 communicants in this country. They breed like rabbits and ought to make a showing by this time of

10,000,000. But according to their own padded account they only have 12,679,142, and one third of these are little children. And how they do grow over their great gains, which in fact, come alone from emigration. They have a great organization and put up a mighty bluff; but emigrate as they will, and breed as they will, their ranks grow thinner year by year.

The same holds good with the clerical chancellors on the Protestant side. They boast of their steady gains, but should they weed out, appalling losses to their numbers would be shown. They boast of several new churches being built every day, but say nothing of those abandoned. The country church is a thing of the past, 75 per cent of which have no congregations.

But laying all this aside, according to their own count, they have only 32,936,440, out of over 91,000,000 population or one in three. Thirty-two millions in the church and 59,000,000 out of it. There is no way of getting at any actual count of the really and truly interested church members in this country. That is, people who work for the church, who support it and go to it. But at a guess, I believe there is about 15,000,000 in all, or about one in five. At this rate of decrease in 100 years there will be no church. The Christianity of today is no more like that of fifty years ago than a nicely cultivated farm is like a tangle, and in another 100 years the change will be so great that a person living today wouldn't know it. It will have developed into a system of ethics, and the name by which it is now known will be known no more forever.

The Christian superstition is on the toboggan and taking some flying leaps in the air right now. The church we have to keep up with the crowd. "Come back to us! Come back to us!" is its cry today to millions who once were with it, and who have stepped backward, but only the few come back.

And strange, the clergy keep crowing over their reputed gains (?) seemingly unconscious of the ability of men at large to figure for themselves.

What do they suppose are the thoughts of the average person when he perceives that the church with its powerful organization and hundreds of millions of expenditures, has only 32,000,000, while the Philistines without organization and without spending money have 59,000,000?

But worst of all, they have God on their side—who watches over them, even as he observes the sparrows fall. Back of them they not only have the support of the State, but the mighty strength of the omnipotent God, and still they can only count one in three. They have the training and education of their children born in the church, and they can't even keep many of them in the fold.

In their desperation they are scheming to raise three billion dollars by which they are going to convert the world in 25 years. The worst shrewd brains in any lunatic asylum in the country couldn't conceive of a crazier idea. With unlimited means and advantages, they can't convert and bring to Christ even the people all around them. They may as well try to change the complexions of men and the shapes of their noses as to change their minds by the expenditure of money. For the last 25 years they have been trying to get God in the Constitution, and they could not even do that, and then they dream of changing the minds of three-fourths of all the people in the world. Is it any wonder the men of the professions—the Dr. Elgiers, etc., and men of all classes are dropping away from it? Is it any wonder the Pope is no longer the dictator of men and nations, but only a pious beggar and a desperate political schemer?

If the clergy were real wise men they would keep all church statistics out of print for what else do their figures prove but the impotence of the Almighty, as well as their own

J. B. W.

PROVIDENCE?

(By Joel M. Berry.) An Associated Press dispatch dated Berne, Switzerland, January 10th, 1909, says, during service today in an ancient church near Sion it suddenly collapsed burying the worshippers in its ruins. All the members of the congregation were either killed or injured. A wild panic followed, three who escaped,

rushed out running through the city shouting that an earthquake had overtaken the village. After an hour's exertion the fire department of the place extricated forty corpses, but it is believed there are still a number under the ruins. Sixty persons were badly injured. The collapse was caused by the time worn pillars giving away. Such occurrences as the one above reported are so frequent that a believer in the intervention of a supreme being in the affairs of men might be excusable for inferring that that being was malevolent instead of merciful or even just, or that he was making frequent manifestations of his own non-existence. That is, that he was performing wonders causing catastrophes, refusing to protect his most devoted worshippers for the express purpose of demonstrating to mankind that he is utterly devoid of mercy, or that he is not wise enough to foresee and know how to prevent such awful calamities, or that he is not all-mighty and not able to prevent them, or that no such being as a providential God rules over the phenomena of nature and the affairs of men. If a human being were to show such inability or such ignorance or such lack of mercy, as to cause or allow such an occurrence as above cited he would be looked upon by his followers as either an imbecile, a weakling or a moral monster. And we know of such things as a logic especially adapted to reasoning about divine things, but most of necessity, judge of the acts of the gods (if we grant their existence) in the same way and by the same rules as we judge of the actions of men, for all supposed gods are conceived of as Anthropomorphic (man-like) and they are made in the likeness of man. The lesson men should learn from such calamities as these, is not that they should put their trust in a divine providence and implore him to interfere with the laws of nature, but study the laws of nature themselves and they will have no use for any divine providence or any other divine being.

AN APPEAL

Ladies and Gentlemen: We, the undersigned, address you in the interest of humanity, and in commemoration of the heroes and heroines who have died for human liberty.

We believe that such a cause will strongly appeal to you. We are members of the Indiana Rationalist Association, The Buckeye Secular Union, The American Secular Union, The National Association of America, The Independent Religious Society of Chicago, and the Paine Historical Society; and are subscribers to all the leading Free-thought papers in America. We urge each one of you to unite at once with one or more Free-thought societies, and to subscribe for one or more Free-thought papers. We are perfectly sure if you do so that future generations will sing your praises and call you blessed. You will also have the proud satisfaction of seeing the stainless ramparts of the motley hosts of superstition crumbling away under the dismantled ramparts of the motley hosts of superstition.

We make this appeal in full confidence that you will help with your time and your money in the holy warfare of science against the priests of Jehovah, King, tyrants, popes and priests in all

ages of the world, perceiving the benefits and power which came from organization.

If gods and devils and priests, the only enemies of the race, are ever overthrown, it must be done by organized Rationalism. There is no example in the whole history of the world where an organized priesthood ever relaxed its godlike grip from the throat of liberty. The Ethiopian could change his skin and the leopard his spots as easily as a Pope or a priest could become a lover of humanity and freedom.

We therefore beseech all Rationalists—every one of you—to get together in a compact organization and help to inaugurate a reign of reason in the Republic bequeathed to us by Jefferson, Paine and Franklin.

The vile old strumpet of orthodox religion sits in the palaces and parlors of the world, and compels mankind to do her bidding and to pay her homage. A world-wide movement to become her panders, procurers and tools for her infamous uses. This vile old hag intrudes herself at every birth, and at every death, at every marriage, and in our schools with her dismal crooning; and would if unrestrained do as she has done in other lands where unrestrained and opposed. She would make of our own fair Columbia a despotism like that of Russia or Spain. The Free-thinkers actually outnumber the forces of superstition fully two to one; and if we were but organized we could easily rid our land of priestly rule and tyranny. Ladies and gentlemen, let us organize and get busy.

DR. T. J. BOWLES,
Pres. Indiana Rationalist Association,
WM. Y. BUCK,
SCHUYLER LATOURETTE.

JOHN C. BECK,
JOHN H. PRINCE.

Officials Ind. R. A.

I heartily second the strong letter of Dr. Bowles. It sometimes seems that we have about all the religion and personal freedom we are entitled to, considering how little we have done and are doing to secure it. Compare our own slothful indifference with the cash enthusiasm of the organized forces of superstition. The Catholics of Indiana recently raised a pile of money for a "nobody knows what" fund. In less than a week the Presbyterians of the same city raised \$15,000 for a new church building. There are now 175 churches in the city. A young Catholic tells me he makes \$1500 a year soliciting subscriptions for a Catholic news paper. There are scores of prosperous Catholic and Protestant papers, supported by public patronage and by endowment simply because they are religious papers.

It is human nature that we acquire love for a cause by working and sacrificing for it. As lovers of mental liberty, let us wake up, and get in the fight. If there is a Free-thought society near, let us join it. If none, let us organize one. Three energetic Free-thinkers in a township would do more for the cause than twenty. I know for I've tried it.

Did you ever hear of a wealthy Free-thought editor? It is a constant wonder how some of our excellent and brave papers exist, the way they are neglected by some of their admiring friends, who hugely enjoy the contents, but never help to pay the heavy expenses. The circulation is necessarily limited, and the papers are boycotted by all the orthodox advertisers. I support them to the best of my limited ability, and

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would rather let my taxes go delinquent than to lapse my subscription to any of them. Within the past year I have given over \$50.00 of my slender means to the cause of Rationalism, and honestly I never enjoyed anything else quite as well. I shall bequeath a goodly lump of life insurance when I go hence. The suggestion of the good Dr. Bowles is fine. What can I do to help? I will contribute to the general cause only, not to any individual.

Fraternally,
D. W. SANDERS.

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